Is Russia More Pro-Life Than the United States?

By Dennis DiMauro, Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

Russia has passed a new law prohibiting the vast majority of abortions after 12 weeks of pregnancy. This new law (while simply a first step in the ancient land) is a great culture change. It will result in a great amount ofBirth Control

**Prayerfully Pro-Choice: Resources for Abortion Providers**

By Georgette Forney, National Director, NOEL

After reading the book, "Only Abortion?" NOEL concluded there are fundamental theological and ethical differences between the Episcopal Church's position on abortion related issues and the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC) statements and publications. According to the most recent information provided to NOEL by the Episcopal Church of the United States (ECUSA) of America NOEL submitted a resolution calling for the General Convention to direct the ECUSA and its affiliate organizations, the Episcopal Church Women (ECW) and the Episcopal Commission on the Status of Women, to withdraw membership and financial support for the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC). There were specific statements by RCRC that, while not heretical, the endorsement of ECUSAs official statements, show clearly inconsistent worldviews.

1. RCRC believes in the existence of absolute, God-given sexual and reproductive freedom, including abortion rights: "Your sexuality is a blessing, not a curse, and your need to express it is to be honored, not despised. You, and no one else, are 'called to figure out what this unwanted child is to you.'" (Diann L. Neu's "Affirming a Choice" liturgy in RCRC's 1994 "Resolution A054 of the 71st General Convention,clearly states: "We emphatically oppose abortion as a means of birth control, family planning, sex selection, or any reason of mere convenience."

2. RCRC supports the idea that the moral agency of a woman, whether adult or teen, is subjective, isolated from others, from Christian community, and from tradition: "Place both hands over your heart and imagine or remember a time when you were feeling full of love, relaxed, and happy. Notice how your body responds. Where in your body do you experience sensations of warmth, relaxation, softening, and expansiveness? This is where your truth resides. Listen to this place as you seek to discover what is right." (RCRC: Abortion: Finding Your Own Truth)

3. RCRC rejects the sanctity of any pro-choice decision. You, and no one else, are 'called to figure out what this unwanted child is to you.'" (Diann L. Neu's "Affirming a Choice" liturgy in RCRC's 1994 "Resolution A054 of the 71st General Convention, clearly states: "We emphatically oppose abortion as a means of birth control, family planning, sex selection, or any reason of mere convenience."

4. RCRC accepts the legitimacy of abortion as birth control: "Your sexuality is a blessing, not a curse, and your need to express it is to be honored, not despised. You, and no one else, are 'called to figure out what this unwanted child is to you.'" (Diann L. Neu's "Affirming a Choice" liturgy in RCRC's 1994 "Resolution A054 of the 71st General Convention, clearly states: "We emphatically oppose abortion as a means of birth control, family planning, sex selection, or any reason of mere convenience."

5. RCRC claims the holiness of abortion: "woman has made a good and holy decision to have an abortion." (Diann L. Neu's "Affirming a Choice" liturgy in RCRC's 1994 "Resolution A054 of the 71st General Convention, clearly states: "We emphatically oppose abortion as a means of birth control, family planning, sex selection, or any reason of mere convenience."

NOEL Asks Episcopal Church to Withdraw from RCRC

By Dennis DiMauro, National Director, NOEL

While no one is suggesting that the Episcopal Church be forced to give up their fight against the law (while simply a first step in the Russian pro-life movement) is a great culture change. It will result in a great amount of abortions per year. (a horrible statistic in its own right) and you can see how a culture of death Russia was in those days. We should be thankful for the Russian pro-life movement. However, even though abortion was such an accepted practice in the late 1980’s, we see that Russia’s democracy was still able to prohibit nearly all abortions in the second and third trimesters last month - while here in the United States we must fight tooth and nail to even prohibit an abortion technique that takes place when a child is nearly born.

Why the disparity? Isn’t US the freest country in the world? Who won the cold war anyway? A few points are clear:

1) While we may have greater freedoms than just about any country in the world, including Russia, we may no longer be the most democratic country in the world. Somewhere along the way we seem to have given away a lot of our democracy to the courts, and our judges often legislate from the bench rather than act in their designated role as a constitutional check on our Legislative and Executive branches. And Roe v. Wade, with its unchanged opinion that equated the constitutional right to life with the constitutional right to privacy, has cost the pro-life movement the only hope for a nation-wide ban on abortion. It is indeed the best example of such legislation from the bench. The result is that, unlike in Russia, all our pro-life legislation is limited by the courts.

2) People’s opinions on abortion are often shaped by the pro-choice forces that seem to teach us pro-lifers here in the U. S.

First of all, this new law is especially welcome considering Russia’s drastically decreased abortion rates. In the country’s second trimester, abortion was used as a primary means of birth control, and abortions were common. In fact, 1998, one year before the Berlin Wall collapsed, there were 4.6 million abortions performed in that nation. Compare that to the annual U.S. number of 1.2 million abortions per year (a horrible statistic in its own right) and you can see how a culture of death Russia was in those days. However, even though abortion was such an accepted practice in the late 1980’s, we see that Russia’s democracy was still able to prohibit nearly all abortions in the second and third trimesters last month - while here in the United States we must fight tooth and nail to even prohibit an abortion technique that takes place when a child is nearly born.

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The Abortion “Was Eating away at My Insides”: A Testimony

by Marie Johnson

From: Lifewatch, Taskforce of the United Methodists on Abortion and Sexuality

In 1973 I was a middle-class, single, 23-year-old college student. After a “one night stand,” I learned that I was pregnant. There was no one to whom I could turn. Alone, I went to the university medical center and had a D&C abortion. Afterwards, I walked home—again, alone.

A year later, despite precautions, I was pregnant again. My boyfriend wanted nothing to do with the whole situation, so he gave me half the abortion fee. I drove myself to a clinic an hour away, had the abortion, and drove home alone. That was the end of the relationship with that man. And that was the end of my problem, I thought.

In 1976, I married and settled in another state. We joined a United Methodist church, and I became active in its UMW chapter. At a UMW meeting in the early 1980s, during a discussion of abortion, I admitted, even bragged about, my two abortions. I did not mention any details, or that my thoughts and feelings were eating away at me inside.

Months later, I shared my experiences of abortion - and the pain, guilt, and fears they caused - with a friend. I was convinced that God hated me and would punish me with no more children. My friend listened and cared. In the midst of many tears, we prayed for God’s forgiveness. And forgiveness came. I remember that moment as if it happened yesterday.

From personal experience, I know that abortion virtually guarantees the “devastating damage” our Social Principles say we want to avoid. If I were the only woman to experience these consequences of abortion, then my testimony could be ignored. Unfortunately, there are millions of women, like me, who have had abortions and who have suffered similar, or worse, consequences. Even Planned Parenthood’s Alan Guttmacher Institute admits that 90% of the women who have had abortions would not have done so if they had believed they had another option. All women who face unplanned pregnancies need people who will care about them and their long-term welfare. As followers of Jesus Christ, as The United Methodist Church, we can and we should love them both.

Associate Membership Application

Yes, I would like to become an Associate Member of the National Pro-Life Religious Council, Inc.

Enclosed is my fee of $25.00 for membership as: ...an individual ...a church ...a group ...a business ...other

I would like to make a tax deductible donation of $ ____ to help NPRC with its important work.

Contact Person: 

Church or Group: 

Address: 

City: State: Zip: 

Denomination: 

Phone (h): (w): 

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